

**Mel Tonasket** was born on the Colville Indian Reservation. He served in the U.S. Navy, U.S. Naval Security Group. He worked for six years with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Colville Indian Agency, Colville Indian Reservation. He was a public affairs specialist for the Portland Area Office of the Indian Health Service, director of Indian Policy and Support Services for the Washington Department of Social and Health Services, and service unit director for the Colville Indian Health Center. He also owned and operated Omache Health Spa in Omak.

He currently serves on the Colville Confederated Tribal Council (he has been a member for 19 years) was formerly chairman of the School Board for Paschal Sherman Indian School in Omak. He was elected president of the National Congress of American Indians for two terms and 1st vice president for one term. He was a member of the congressional American Indian Policy Review Commission for two years and has represented U.S. tribal governments at the World Council of Indigenous Peoples and at the Inter-American Indigenous Conference in Brazil.

Mr. Tonasket was a member of the Public Health Improvement Plan Steering Committee and is on the State Advisory Committee for the Department of Social and Health Services. Other advisory board and committee appointments have included: the Indian Education Program, Eastern Washington University; the Graduate School of Public Administration, University of Washington; the Environmental Studies Program, University of Washington; The Future of Rural Health Advisory Committee, Washington Health Foundation; and the Indian Policy and Support Services Advisory Committee, Department of Social and Health Services (Colville delegate). He is on the board of directors for the United Indians of All Tribes Foundation and the Okanogan Regional Home Health and Hospice. He served previously on the boards of Northwest Renewable Resources Center, the Governor's Indian Advisory Council, and Family Health Centers.